

Indiana Bike Trails Task Force
Meeting Notes
August 15, 2017

The first meeting of the Indiana Bicycle Trails Task Force commenced on August 15, 2017 at approximately 10:00 am in the Indiana Government Center South Media Telecommunications Room in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Mark Newman, Executive Director of the Indiana Office of Tourism Development (IOTD) led the meeting and provided a brief welcome and opening remarks. Newman stated that the Bike Trails Task Force administrative leadership is a collaborative effort of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and IOTD. Newman also stated that he was excited to fulfill the directives of House Bill 1174 and the vision of Rep. Wes Culver. Newman then provided an overview of the meeting agenda.

MEMBER INTRODUCTIONS

Mark Newman addressed the group and asked all members to provide a brief introduction including their name, their position, city or community in which they represent and how they are connected to bicycling, trails or both.

Each person was given the opportunity to speak briefly.

- Representative Wes Culver – State representative from the Elkhart/Goshen area. Representative Culver authored the bill that created the Bike Trails Task Force and also serves on the Indiana Tourism Council.
- Roy Nunnally – Representing the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT), serves as a director in the planning and programming section. Bike/Ped is part of the program and planning section oversight.
- Kara Kish – Serves as superintendent of the Vigo County Parks Department. Ms. Kish oversaw the Griffin Bike Park project in Terre Haute.
- Jeff Smallwood – Serves as a board member of the B&O Trail Association in Avon (Hendricks County).
- Rebecca Holwerda – Member of Governor Holcomb’s staff and serves as Senior Operations Director. She is also an avid cyclist.
- Amy Marisavljevic – Representing the Indiana DNR and their division of Outdoor Recreation. Marisavljevic is a trail specialist with DNR and is also an avid road cyclist and mountain biker.
- Representative Carey Hamilton – State Representative from the north side of Indianapolis. Rep. Hamilton is also an avid cyclist and hiker. She co-authored and sponsored House Bill 1174.
- Bruce Kimball – Serves as a member of the Carmel, Indiana City Council. Kimball hopes to use this project to promote the city of Carmel as well as quality of life and economic development in his community.
- Cameron Clark – Director of the Indiana DNR – Director Clark offered his staff to assist and provide resources to this task force. Clark stated that Amy Marisavljevic will serve as his representative on the task force.
- Justin Schneider – Representing the Indiana Farm Bureau. Schneider will represent land owners through the task force discussion and provide perspective for that group on the other end. Schneider is also working on the Bicentennial Trails Passage project and is a resident of Columbus, Indiana.
- Vince Griffin – Retired from Indiana Chamber of Commerce. Griffin and his wife are avid cyclists. He is very excited to work on this project for Indiana.
- Kyle Hannon – President of the Elkhart Chamber of Commerce – Hannon is working with the Elkhart Chamber to help members understand the benefits of cycling for economic development and quality of life. He also serves as part of the Mayor’s Pedal Panel in Elkhart.
- Paul Grayson – Mr. Grayson is a native of Indianapolis and currently serves as the Vice President of Operations – He also provides leadership to the Bicentennial Trails Passage committee and rides his bike every chance he can.

- Pete Fritz – Serves as a Healthy Communities Planner with the Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH). Fritz is an avid cyclist and has served as the past chair of Bicycle Indiana. Fritz has also served as a consultant with DNR in the past. Through his current position, Fritz works on funding projects across the state to promote healthy communities.
- Dr. Jerome Adams – Serves as the Indiana State Health Commissioner. Dr. Adams stated this is his first and last meeting as he will be moving on from his position as State Health Commissioner to serve as U.S. Surgeon General. Dr. Adams thanked Representative Culver for putting forth the bill and would like the group to focus on the community development and economic development in addition to the health aspect of this task force. Adams stated Pete Fritz will serve on the task force in representation of ISDH.
- Noelle Szydlyk - Indiana Office of Tourism Development, Director of Planning and Development, Outdoor Recreation and Sport Tourism. Szydlyk stated she will serve as the administrator for the task force.
- Mark Newman – Executive Director of the Indiana Office of Tourism Development will provided his connection to the task force during his welcome at the beginning of the meeting. Newman stated that Szydlyk will represent IOTD at Bicycle Trails Task Force meetings.
- Dean Peterson – Peterson is the head coach of the National Champion Marian University cycling team and as director of the Indy Cycloplex, home of the Major Taylor Velodrome. Peterson is a long time cyclist and advocate for cycling for health and safety of cyclist. Peterson has traveled and biked around the world and stated that while Indiana is behind in the world of bicycling, he is excited to be a part of Indiana moving forward.
- Mayor SuzAnne Handshoe – Joined the meeting via conference call. As the Mayor of Kendallville, Mayor Handshoe is working to connect people in her city through funding received from Regional Cities Initiative. Handshoe plans to connect Kendallville and Rome City through a comprehensive trails program.
- Andrew Forrester – Joined the meeting via conference call. Forrester is working on creating trails to connect those on the bluff with those on the river in Madison, IN. Madison is a finalist for the Stellar Communities Designation Program. Forrester mentioned the trail development is part of the Madison Stellar development plan.

READING OF THE BILL

Mark Newman asked Representative Wes Culver to read the final version of House Bill 1174. Representative Culver directed the group to refer to the copy of the bill in their packet of materials. A link to the bill is provided here: <https://iga.in.gov/legislative/2017/bills/house/1174#document-aa990f45>

REVIEW AND EXPLANATION OF THE BILL

Mark Newman asked Representative Wes Culver to provide an overview of the bill and a brief explanation as to the purpose and goals of House Bill 1174.

Representative Culver provided a thorough explanation of the purpose and why the bill was written. The purpose was broken down into the following bullet points:

- To increase tourism in Indiana
 - Culver stated that being in a car is a good way to visit Indiana, but being on a trail is a better way.
- To improve quality of life
 - Culver stated that Indiana has workers and needs jobs to fill. There are companies are looking for places to relocate or start their business. They are looking for places where people enjoy living before they bring their business to Indiana.
 - Residents are enjoying exercise more today than ever before. Improving the quality of life helps to draw young and old into Indiana or back to Indiana to find jobs.

- Trails can create a mechanism for communities to work together. Communities can build a trail by working across county borders. This will assist in creating a master plan for a region rather than just a county or city.
- To find a creative way to fund the program. There are lots of plans for trails in place, but funding continues to be of concern.
- To make Indiana the premier state for trails and bicycling in the US. In the United States we are already ranked high for mountain bike trails. There are also auxiliary items like the Marian University cycling program and the Little 500 in Bloomington that support this idea.
- To create an event or trail system that can promote the end product (tourism) – 500 mile route to be promoted as a tourism asset.
- To allow the task force to create something that triggers a lasting impact that will continue to work beyond the 2 years of the task force commitment.

TRAILS CURRENT OVERVIEW

Mark Newman asked Amy Marisavljevic with DNR to provide an update and overview of the existing trails system in Indiana.

Marisavljevic spoke about the DNR Division of Outdoor Recreation and how they assist communities and municipalities in the development of trails. She then provided a quick list of statistics regarding existing trail systems in Indiana.

- There are 1,500 miles of hard surface trails, specifically off-roadway (described as paved surfaces that are separated from the roadway) in Indiana.
- There are over 600 miles of trails that are gravel, dirt or crushed stone and are made for mountain bike tires and allow for off road riding.

Marisavljevic referred to a large printout of the full Visionary Trail System map as well as the US Bike Route Map. She explained that the last visionary drawing for Indiana done in 2014, prior to 2015 SCORP (Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan). The SCORP is completed by the Indiana DNR, Division of Outdoor Recreation. These maps are available in the Trails Plan Chapter of 2016-2020 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan at: <http://www.in.gov/dnr/outdoor/files/chap6.pdf>; Visionary Trail System- pg. 95-97 and the US Bike Routes- pg. 101

Marisavljevic commented that the Visionary Trail System map shows many trails that are still in the planning or development stage. Not all trails on the map are complete and some are not even started at this point. There is a key with the map that shows which trails are complete, which are in development and which are simply ideas communities are working on.

Marisavljevic explained that DNR is continually looking at ideas as to where we might find connections within the existing/completed trail map and continue to keep track of what is going on in Indiana. DNR and the Division of Outdoor Recreation will also provide assistance and direction to the group specifically in this area.

A question was posed by Dr. Adams regarding a large open spot in southwestern Indiana where there are little to no trails and no plans on the horizon. He asked why there is this gap in the trail system.

Marisavljevic responded with the following explanation. Geography and topography of the area makes it difficult access to resources to complete trails. While there are fewer trails, mountain bike trails are primarily in southern Indiana as they take advantage of the topography. Many of these mountain biking trails are in our Indiana state parks but not all. Northern communities had empty or unused railways that were used to create trails. There are southern communities that have railways, but many are still in use by the railroad.

Communities such as Versailles, Brown County and Harmony state park all are using their mountain bike trails to drive tourism in their community.

Marisavljevic provided two options for locating trails in Indiana. The Indiana Trail Finder online can be used to view paved vs. natural surface trails and can be found at:

<https://indnr.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=332ed3e954974914b26284525ecb1068>. If committee members are searching for looking for road bike lanes that are different than off-roadway trails, those are best accessed using Google Maps.

US BIKE ROUTES (36, 35, and 50) OVERVIEW

Roy Nunnally of the Indiana Department of Transportation provided an explanation and overview of the US Bike Route program in Indiana.

Nunnally stated that the national bike route system is similar to the national highway system. He explained that Indiana has currently 3 USBR designated routes in the state. The map and explanation of these routes can be found on INDOT's website at <http://www.in.gov/indot/3422.htm>.

- USBR 35 (north to south)
- USBR 50 (runs parallel to US 40 – east to west)
- USBR 36 (runs along the northern border of Indiana east to west)

In explaining the cost of implementation of the USBR program in Indiana, Nunnally stated that it was done at no cost to INDOT to implement. A great deal of the “work” was done by advocacy and special interest groups in coordination with community and city planners. Nunnally did review the challenges to the program that they will continue to work on to alleviate going forward if new USBR routes are to be added.

Connecting the special interest and advocacy groups to make sure they communicated with each other was a constant challenge. The groups did a great job helping with this and the Metropolitan Planning Organizations in various areas also assisted in the effort to communicate and share the message. INDOT relied on cycling, trails, tourism and other advocacy groups at the local level to coordinate with cities and communities to create the routes.

Nunnally also stated that an opportunity was missed in focusing on the destinations along the route and not just the roadways and getting from point A to point B. Connecting these destination with the route was not part of the forethought before the routes were determined. This will be considered moving forward.

The final challenge that remains in development is creating an appropriate signage program for the USBR routes. Nunnally stated that INDOT is working on a program to get the signs approved and funded. They are also working on a cost table in order to determine the best ways to fund the signage. In talking with USBR organizers in other states, INDOT learned the signage along the route is very important part of the promotion of the route and if not done properly confusion can occur.

Nunnally also provided basic background information and updates on USBR. Nunnally shared:

- Indiana was the 18th state to join the USBR program. We joined in September of 2015.
- There is currently about 600 miles of designated USBR roadway.
- There is a group in Bloomington currently hoping/working on adding USBR 235. This project is still in the planning.

In addition to the background, Nunnally provided a number of INDOT links post meeting that could be helpful as the Bike Trails Task Force moves forward. These links are specific to the INDOT Bike/Ped programs.

- INDOT Bike and Ped Website <https://www.in.gov/indot/2828.htm>
- INDOT US Bike Route Website <http://www.in.gov/indot/3422.htm>
- INDOT Complete Streets Program Website <https://www.in.gov/indot/3284.htm>
- INDOT Common Path Initiative Website <https://www.in.gov/indot/3419.htm>

In addition to the links listed included, INDOT has also created a statewide bicycle suitability map. Nunnally stated that this map may be helpful to the group working on the Bike Trails Task Forces. The map can be used for connectivity. INDOT Bicycle Suitability Map: http://www.in.gov/indot/files/LRP_BicycleSuitabilityMap.pdf

In conclusion of his review of USBR as well as INDOT's bike/ped programs, Nunnally also provided details regarding what INDOT is working on since the House Bill 1174 was introduced. As a result of the bill, INDOT has adjusted an RFP that was already in process to identify a consultant to work on Bike/Ped programs. In their efforts to match the RFP up with the details of the bill, Nunnally stated, INDOT revised the original RFP to identify a person to provide assistance with connecting trails (specifically road bike routes) to the statewide Bike/Ped Plan. They are also working on an 18-24 month timeframe with a plan to distribute the RFP in November. The RFP has not yet been released and should be considered confidential. Nunnally has requested feedback from the Bike Trails Task Force on the RFP.

A copy of a draft of the RFP is attached to the meeting notes email.

Jeff Smallwood asked a question regarding what types of trails this group is focusing on. He mentioned that the USBR is made up of paved roadways as well as off-roadway paved trails. He also asked if the USBR Designation brings funding with it. The answer from Roy Nunnally was no it does not bring funding. Pete Fritz also added that the designation does allow communities along the route to request funding from INDOT, put in for national grants. Mark Newman added that some communities along US Bike Routes are establishing themselves as trail towns to promote their space/community along the route.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART OVERVIEW

Noelle Szydlyk provided an overview of the basic organizational chart that was put together prior to the development of the task force. Szydlyk explained that a small group met to develop a local organizing committee type concept in order give some organization to the task force. The Organizational Chart was put together as a game plan to provide suggestion and direction as to who would support the six divisions to support and carry out what is outlined in the bill. In addition, there are sub-topics that can eventually be sub-committees, to allow more people in the bicycle and trails committee to be involved.

Szydlyk further explained the intent is for the Bike Trails Task Force members to take an active role in the committee and have an area to focus on. This task force is being asked to look at the larger picture, focus on the actionable concepts and participate in strategic planning. Confirmation was provided by Szydlyk that everyone will continue to get updates from the other committees and will also have an active voice on all areas of the task force.

As a take away from the meeting, Bike Trails Task Force members are asked to review the organizational chart and provide the following feedback:

- Did we capture all areas that need to be addressed by the task force?
- Determine what committee or area is of most interest to you. (Task force members are able to work on more than one area.)

- What groups/organizations are underrepresented groups/organizations that would be good addition to the non-voting portion of the task force?

Jeff Smallwood followed up the overview provided by Szydlyk with a question. Does everything (each box) work sequentially or simultaneously? Szydlyk responded with the following. A timeline is critical to the task force and still needs to be developed so we have an understanding of which group is doing what and when they plan to accomplish each task. Additionally, this Task Force is focused on strategy and not specifically on implementation which allows all the groups to work simultaneously. Paul Grayson added that we need to look at the brush strokes. Justin Schneider offered that the Task Force needs to look at the concepts to determine what works best and use the knowledge in the room. He also commented that we need to develop strategies first across the board so we can move forward.

Additional conversation and questions were addressed and points made.

Mark Newman confirmed that the Bike Trails Task Force will remain intact for a year beyond the end in order to address issues, concerns and move forward.

Jeff Smallwood voiced a concern over putting a “pie in the sky” concept in place and then not have the funds to support it. Smallwood wanted to make sure funding is in place, so there is an opportunity to implement some of the concept and ideas identified. Smallwood expressed further concern from his experience that there is a great deal of work and conceptualization done and then the group is stuck with no funding to implement what was developed. Smallwood’s final suggestion on this topic was to set a goal and determine the next steps that can move this forward.

Vince Griffin added a reminder that the timing for the Task Force to complete their directive is Timing is shorter than the actual 2 year timing. Due to general assembly budget session in January 2019, if there is to be an actual request for funding it will need to be prepared and ready in approximately 16 months.

Justin Schneider offered some suggestions regarding working with land owners and others the task force may need to work with moving forward. Schneider offered that the broader the discussion can be to make sure there is a greater concept and that it isn’t only about bike trails. He said the group should think about how it connects to the next thing (communities, hiking trails, etc.). This way of thinking and strategizing creates less push back, is more efficient, and provides a greater number of reasons for communities and landowners to jump on board.

NOMINATION PROCESS

Mark Newman provided a brief overview of the nomination process. Newman stated, we will now elect the Chair and the Vice-Chair of the Task Force. We will handle the election of the Chair first, and the election of the Vice-Chair second. Newman explained that members may nominate themselves or another member of the task force. He asked that when a member make their nomination that they include a thought or two about the strengths of the nominee for consideration. Newman also explained that if a member was nominated and did not wish to serve, they are free to decline the nomination. Newman explained that nominations would be collected verbally and written on the white pad at the front of the room. Then a vote would be taken by silent ballot. Votes would be collected and counted and a Chairperson and Vice Chairperson would be determined.

The floor was opened for nominations for Chairperson. All members of the committee were eligible to serve as Chairperson. Kyle Hannon was nominated by Vince Griffin and accepted the nomination. Wes Culver was

nominated by Dean Peters but declined the nomination. Mark Newman was nominated by Rebecca Holwerda, but declined the nomination.

Vince Griffin moved the nominations be closed. Kyle Hannon was determined to be the Chairperson without a vote as he was the only person that accepted the nomination. The members were all in agreement with the selection for Chairperson.

The floor was opened for nominations for Vice Chairperson. All members of the committee were eligible to serve as Vice Chairperson. Paul Grayson was nominated by Vince Griffin and accepted the nomination. Representative Carey Hamilton was nominated by Rebecca Holwerda, but declined the nomination. Vince Griffin was nominated by Jeff Smallwood, but declined the nomination.

Vince Griffin moved the nominations be closed. Paul Grayson was determined to be the Vice Chairperson without a vote as he was the only person that accepted the nomination. The members were all in agreement with the selection for Vice Chairperson.

NEXT MEETING DATE SELECTION

Mark Newman asked Noelle Szydlyk to address the group regarding the selection of a next meeting date. Due to the large number of people and coordinating schedules, Szydlyk decided to table to meeting date discussion and send out a survey to the members. Bike Trails Task Force members would receive a survey to determine the best day of the week, location, time of day and month to start the quarterly meetings that would follow. Szydlyk also planned to follow up with Chairman Kyle Hannon and Vice Chairman Paul Grayson to finalize the date and location.

MEETING ADJOURNMENT

Mark Newman called for the meeting to be adjourned at approximately 11:36 am.